

Message Text

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TO USMISSION GENEVA

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TAGS: ECE, EAGR

SUBJECT: ECE - COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURAL PROBLEMS, FORE-
CASTING MECHANIZATION IN AGRICULTURE

FOLLOWING IS RESPONSE TO EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S LETTER
(LG/AGRI/75/4) WHICH REQUESTED GOVERNMENTS TO PROVIDE
".....CONCISE NOTES ON THE METHODS USED IN FORECASTING
MECHANIZATION DEVELOPMENTS IN THEIR COUNTRIES AND, WHENEVER
APPROPRIATE, RELEVANT RESULTS OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES....."
WHILE THIS MAY BE RELATIVELY SIMPLE IN PLANNED ECONOMY
COUNTRIES, IT IS NOT SO IN THE UNITED STATES. NEVERTHELESS,
GENERALIZATIONS BELOW MAY BE USEFUL TO THE SECRETARIAT.

1. U.S. PRIVATE INDUSTRY HAS DEVELOPED ITS OWN METHODOLOGY
FOR FORECASTING MECHANIZATION DEVELOPMENTS. THEY DO FORE-
CAST EQUIPMENT NEEDS AND DEVELOP THEIR MANUFACTURING AND
DISTRIBUTION CAPACITY TO MEET THOSE NEEDS. EACH COMPANY
HAS ITS OWN METHOD OF MAKING PROJECTIONS WHICH IS CON-
SIDERED RESTRICTED AND PRIVILEGED INFORMATION. IN MOST
INSTANCES THEY ALSO USE STATISTICS GATHERED FROM GOVERNMENT
AGENCIES AND PROJECT ON TREND LINES.

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2. THE U.S. DEPT OF AGRICULTURE'S ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE COLLECTS CURRENT DATA ON COMMODITY PRODUCTION, FARM RESOURCES, EXPORTS, TAXES, POPULATION CONSUMPTION, MACHINERY, ETC. THESE DATA ARE USED TO ESTABLISH TREND LINES THAT ARE USED FOR FORECASTING.

3. ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE OF USDA HAS MADE SOME FORECASTS OF COMMODITY PRODUCTION UP TO 1985. THESE DATA ARE USED AS INPUTS TO FORECAST MECHANIZATION DEVELOPMENTS. IN GENERAL CURRENT INFORMATION IS COLLECTED ANNUALLY ON MACHINERY SALES, AND PERIODIC SURVEYS ARE MADE TO DETERMINE THE NUMBERS, SIZES, ETC., OF MACHINES ON FARMS. THE PROJECTIONS ARE MADE PRIMARILY ON THE BASIS OF PAST TRENDS. HOWEVER, MODIFICATIONS TO THE PROJECTIONS ARE MADE DEPENDING ON A NUMBER OF OTHER FACTORS, SUCH AS FARM SIZE, TRENDS IN COMMODITY DEMAND AND PRICE, PRODUCTION LEVELS, EXPORTS, PER CAPITA CONSUMPTION, NET PROFIT, ETC. KISSINGER

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